

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) An input device comprising:

a designated value change unit operable to change a designated value using a variation amount associated with the designated value, the designated value being changed using a predetermined first variation amount when a first designated value change directive is received from an operator; and

a variation amount change unit operable to alter the variation amount associated with the designated value from the predetermined first variation amount to a smaller second variation amount when a second designated value change directive that is opposite the first designated value change directive is received from the operator within a predetermined variation amount change period,

wherein the variation amount change unit is further operable to restore the variation amount associated with the designated value from the smaller second variation amount back to the predetermined first variation amount when a variation amount retention period lapses after a previous designated value change directive is received from the operator.

2. (Previously Presented) The input device of Claim 1, wherein the designated value change unit comprises:

an increase unit operable to increase the designated value using the variation amount associated with the designated value when an increase directive is received from the operator; and

a decrease unit operable to decrease the designated value using the variation amount associated with the designated value when a decrease directive is received from the operator,

wherein the first designated value change directive is one of the increase directive and the decrease directive and the second designated value change directive is the other of the increase directive and the decrease directive.

3. (Previously Presented) The input device of Claim 2, further comprising:
an increase button operable to allow the operator to input the increase directive; and
a decrease button operable to allow the operator to input the decrease directive.
4. (Previously Presented) The input device of Claim 1, further comprising:
a display unit operable to visually display information about changes in the designated value or changes in the variation amount associated with the designated value.
5. (Cancelled)
6. (Previously Presented) The input device of Claim 1, further comprising:
an aggregate change management unit operable to manage an aggregate change in the designated value when the variation amount associated with the designated value is altered from the predetermined first variation amount to the smaller second variation amount, wherein the variation amount change unit is operable to restore the variation amount associated with the designated value from the smaller second variation amount back to the predetermined first variation amount when the aggregate change in the designated value exceeds the predetermined first variation amount.

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7. (Previously Presented) The input device of Claim 1, wherein the designated value change unit changes the designated value using the smaller second variation amount when a designated value change directive is received from the operator after the variation amount associated with the designated value has been altered from the predetermined first variation amount to the smaller second variation amount.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Previously Presented) An input method, the method comprising:

- storing a designated value, the designated value being associated with a variation amount;
- changing the designated value using a predetermined first variation amount when a first designated value change directive is received;
- altering the variation amount associated with the designated value from the predetermined first variation amount to a smaller second variation amount when a second designated value change directive that is opposite the first designated value change directive is received within a predetermined variation amount change period; and
- restoring the variation amount associated with the designated value from the smaller second variation amount back to the predetermined first variation amount when a variation amount retention period lapses after a previous designated value change directive is received.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Previously Presented) A computer program product comprising:

a computer usable medium having a computer readable program, wherein the computer readable program when executed on a computer causes the computer to:

store a designated value, the designated value being associated with a variation amount;

change the designated value using a predetermined first variation amount when a first designated value change directive is received;

alter the variation amount associated with the designated value from the predetermined first variation amount to a smaller second variation amount when a second designated value change directive that is opposite the first designated value change directive is received within a predetermined variation amount change period; and

restore the variation amount associated with the designated value from the smaller second variation amount back to the predetermined first variation amount when a variation amount retention period lapses after a previous designated value change directive is received.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Previously Presented) The input device of Claim 1, wherein the variation amount change unit is operable to alter the variation amount associated with the designated value from the smaller second variation amount to an even smaller third variation amount when a third designated value

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change directive that is opposite the second designated value change directive is received from the operator within the predetermined variation amount change period.

16. (Previously Presented) The input device of Claim 1, wherein the variation amount change unit is operable to alter the variation amount associated with the designated value from the predetermined first variation amount to the smaller second variation amount after the second designated value change directive that is opposite the first designated value change directive, a third designated value change directive that is opposite the second designated value change directive, and a fourth designated value change directive that is opposite the third designated value change directive are received from the operator in sequence at intervals shorter than the predetermined variation amount change period.

17. (Previously Presented) The input device of Claim 1, wherein the designated value represents the position of a pointer or the brightness of a screen.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 11, further comprising:

managing an aggregate change in the designated value when the variation amount associated with the designated value is altered from the predetermined first variation amount to the smaller second variation amount; and

restoring the variation amount associated with the designated value from the smaller second variation amount back to the predetermined first variation amount when the aggregate change in the designated value exceeds the predetermined first variation amount.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 11, further comprising:

changing the designated value using the smaller second variation amount when a designated value change directive is received after the variation amount associated with the designated value has been altered from the predetermined first variation amount to the smaller second variation amount.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 11, further comprising:

altering the variation amount associated with the designated value from the smaller second variation amount to an even smaller third variation amount when a third designated value change directive that is opposite the second designated value change directive is received within the predetermined variation amount change period.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 11, further comprising:

altering the variation amount associated with the designated value from the predetermined first variation amount to the smaller second variation amount after the second designated value change directive that is opposite the first designated value change directive, a third designated value change directive that is opposite the second designated value change directive, and a fourth designated value change directive that is opposite the third designated value change directive are received in sequence at intervals shorter than the predetermined variation amount change period.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 11, wherein the designated value represents the position of a pointer or the brightness of a screen.

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23. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of Claim 13, wherein the computer readable program when executed on the computer further causes the computer to:

manage an aggregate change in the designated value when the variation amount associated with the designated value is altered from the predetermined first variation amount to the smaller second variation amount; and

restore the variation amount associated with the designated value from the smaller second variation amount back to the predetermined first variation amount when the aggregate change in the designated value exceeds the predetermined first variation amount.

24. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of Claim 13, wherein the computer readable program when executed on the computer further causes the computer to:

change the designated value using the smaller second variation amount when a designated value change directive is received after the variation amount associated with the designated value has been altered from the predetermined first variation amount to the smaller second variation amount.

25. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of Claim 13, wherein the computer readable program when executed on the computer further causes the computer to:

alter the variation amount associated with the designated value from the smaller second variation amount to an even smaller third variation amount when a third designated value change directive that is opposite the second designated value change directive is received within the predetermined variation amount change period.

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26. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of Claim 13, wherein the computer readable program when executed on the computer further causes the computer to:

alter the variation amount associated with the designated value from the predetermined first variation amount to the smaller second variation amount after the second designated value change directive that is opposite the first designated value change directive, a third designated value change directive that is opposite the second designated value change directive, and a fourth designated value change directive that is opposite the third designated value change directive are received in sequence at intervals shorter than the predetermined variation amount change period.

27. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of Claim 13, wherein the designated value represents the position of a pointer or the brightness of a screen.